

Traffic Safety Facts

2004 Data

Alcohol

“There were 16,694 alcohol-related fatalities in 2004 – 39 percent of the total traffic fatalities for the year.”

Alcohol-Related Crashes and Fatalities

A motor vehicle crash is considered to be *alcohol-related* if at least one driver or nonoccupant (such as a pedestrian or pedalcyclist) involved in the crash is determined to have had a blood alcohol concentration (BAC) of .01 gram per deciliter (g/dL) or higher. Thus, any fatality that occurs in an alcohol-related crash is considered an alcohol-related fatality. The term “alcohol-related” does not indicate that a crash or fatality was caused by the presence of alcohol.

Traffic fatalities in alcohol-related crashes fell by 2.4 percent, from 17,105 in 2003 to 16,694 in 2004. The 16,694 alcohol-related fatalities in 2004 (39% of total traffic fatalities for the year) represent a 4-percent reduction from the 17,308 alcohol-related fatalities reported in 1994 (43% of the total).

The 16,694 fatalities in alcohol-related crashes during 2004 represent an average of one alcohol-related fatality every 31 minutes.

As of 2004, 45 States, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico had created laws making it illegal to drive with a BAC of .08 g/dL or higher. Of the 16,694 people who died in alcohol-related crashes in 2004, 14,409 (86%) were killed in crashes where at least one driver or nonoccupant had a BAC of .08 g/dL or higher. Of the 14,409 people killed in such crashes, 69 percent were drivers or nonoccupants with BAC levels at or above .08 g/dL. The remaining 31 percent were drivers or nonoccupants with either no BAC or BAC below .08 g/dL, or were passengers.

Table 1
Fatalities by Person Type in Crashes Involving at Least One Driver or Nonoccupant with BAC .08 g/dL or Higher, 2004

Person Type	Number	Percent of Total
Drivers with BAC .08 g/dL or Higher	8,256	57
All Other Drivers	983	7
Nonoccupants (Pedestrians and Pedalcyclists) with BAC .08 g/dL or Higher	1,732	12
All Other Nonoccupants	462	3
Passengers	2,976	21
Total Fatalities	14,409	100

NHTSA estimates that alcohol was involved in 39 percent of fatal crashes and in 7 percent of all crashes in 2004. The national rate of alcohol-related fatalities in motor vehicle crashes in 2004 was 0.57 per 100 million vehicle miles traveled.

“In 2004, 21 percent of the children age 14 and younger who were killed in motor vehicle crashes were killed in alcohol-related crashes.”

Injuries and Arrests

An estimated 248,000 people were injured in crashes where police reported that alcohol was present — an average of one person injured approximately every 2 minutes. Approximately 1.4 million drivers were arrested in 2003 for driving under the influence of alcohol or narcotics. This is an arrest rate of 1 for every 135 licensed drivers in the United States (2004 data not yet available).

Table 2

Traffic Fatalities by Age and Highest BAC in the Crash, 2004

Age of Person Killed	Highest BAC in Crash								Total Number Killed
	.00 g/dL		.01-.07 g/dL		.08 g/dL or Higher		.01 g/dL or Higher		
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	
0-3	390	76	26	5	94	18	120	24	510
4-7	395	81	14	3	78	16	92	19	487
8-12	526	82	22	4	92	14	114	18	640
13-15	744	77	57	6	167	17	224	23	968
16-20	3,781	64	394	7	1,721	29	2,115	36	5,896
21-24	1,996	45	312	7	2,157	48	2,469	55	4,465
25-34	3,250	47	426	6	3,178	46	3,605	53	6,855
35-44	3,192	50	335	5	2,856	45	3,191	50	6,383
45-54	3,430	57	298	5	2,258	38	2,555	43	5,985
55-64	2,643	69	164	4	1,006	26	1,170	31	3,813
65-74	2,203	80	110	4	429	16	538	20	2,741
75+	3,325	88	121	3	319	8	440	12	3,765
Unknown	67	52	6	5	55	43	61	48	128
Total	25,942	61	2,285	5	14,409	34	16,694	39	42,636

Table 3

Fatal Crashes Involving at Least One Driver or Nonoccupant with BAC .08 g/dL or Higher and Total Fatalities in Those Crashes, 1994 and 2004

	1994			2004		
	Total	.08 g/dL or Higher*		Total	.08 g/dL or Higher*	
		Number	Percent of Total		Number	Percent of Total
Recorded Crashes	36,254	13,431	37	38,253	12,952	34
DWI Convictions	40,716	14,985	37	42,636	14,409	34

*For any person (occupant or nonoccupant) involved in the fatal crash.

Children

In 2004, 21 percent of the children age 14 and younger who were killed in motor vehicle crashes were killed in alcohol-related crashes.

In 2004, a total of 442 (21%) of the fatalities among children age 14 and younger occurred in crashes involving alcohol. Of those 442 fatalities, approximately half (220) of those killed were passengers in vehicles with drivers who had been drinking, with BAC levels of .01 g/dL or higher. An additional 115 children were killed as passengers in vehicles with drivers who had not been drinking.

Another 64 children age 14 and younger who were killed in traffic crashes in 2004 were pedestrians or pedalcyclists who were struck by drivers with BAC .01 g/dL or higher.

Nonoccupants

More than one-third (36%) of all pedestrians age 16 or older killed in traffic crashes in 2004 had BAC levels of .08 g/dL or higher. By age group, the percentages ranged from a low of 9 percent for pedestrians 65 and older to a high of 52 percent for those ages 21 to 24.

Table 4

Nonoccupants With BAC .08 g/dL or Higher Killed in Motor Vehicle Crashes by Age Group, 1994 and 2004

Nonoccupant Fatalities	1994			2004		
	Total Number of Fatalities	BAC .08 g/dL or Higher		Total Number of Fatalities	BAC .08 g/dL or Higher	
		Number	Percent of Total		Number	Percent of Total
Pedestrian Fatalities by Age Group (Years)						
<16	806	11	1	391	16	4
16-20	272	70	26	265	74	28
21-24	282	137	48	277	145	52
25-34	843	459	54	598	285	48
35-44	902	487	54	776	391	50
45-64	1,074	441	41	1,347	550	41
65+	1,264	125	10	939	84	9
Unknown	46	16	35	48	24	51
Total	5,489	1,745	32	4,641	1,570	34
Pedalcyclist Fatalities						
<16	297	6	2	149	6	4
16-20	69	11	16	49	7	15
21-24	41	12	29	25	6	22
25-34	102	32	31	60	15	25
35-44	116	45	39	145	50	34
45-64	114	29	26	200	58	29
65+	55	1	1	92	6	6
Unknown	8	3	31	5	1	18
Total	802	139	17	725	148	20

*Includes pedestrians age 15 and younger and pedestrians of unknown age.

Alcohol involvement — either for the driver or the pedestrian — was reported in 47 percent of the traffic crashes that resulted in pedestrian fatalities. Of the pedestrians involved, 34 percent had BAC levels of .08 g/dL or higher. Of the drivers involved, only 13 percent had BAC levels of .08 g/dL or higher. In 6 percent of the crashes, both the driver and the pedestrian had BAC levels of .08 g/dL or higher.

Time of Day and Day of Week

The rate of alcohol involvement in fatal crashes is more than 3 times higher at night than during the day (60% vs. 18%). For all crashes, the alcohol involvement rate is 5 times higher at night (16% vs. 3%).

In 2004, 30 percent of all fatal crashes during the week were alcohol-related, compared to 51 percent on weekends. For all crashes, the alcohol involvement rate was 5 percent during the week and 12 percent during the weekend.

“More than one-third of all pedestrians age 16 or older killed in traffic crashes in 2004 had BAC levels of .08 g/dL or higher.”

Table 5
Percentage of Drivers with BAC .08 g/dL or Higher Killed in Motor Vehicle Crashes by Time of Day and Day of Week, 1994 and 2004

Total Driver Fatalities							Change in Percentage with BAC .08 g/dL or Higher, 1994-2004
Driver Fatalities	1994			2004			
	Total Number of Fatalities	BAC .08 g/dL or Higher		Total Number of Fatalities	BAC .08 g/dL or Higher		
		Number	Percent of Total		Number	Percent of Total	
Total	23,691	7,913	33	26,756	8,256	31	-6
Driver Fatalities by Crash Type and Time of Day							
Single-Vehicle Crash							
Total	11,199	5,549	50	13,320	6,052	45	-10
Daytime*	4,275	994	23	5,306	1,135	21	-9
Nighttime**	6,695	4,409	66	7,740	4,753	61	-8
Multiple Vehicle Crash							
Total	12,492	2,364	19	13,436	2,205	16	-16
Daytime*	7,792	630	8	8,524	668	8	0
Nighttime**	4,691	1,734	37	4,903	1,536	31	-16
Driver Fatalities by Day of Week							
Weekday***	13,949	3,323	24	15,824	3,713	23	-4
Weekend****	9,668	4,544	47	10,848	4,493	41	-13
Driver Fatalities by Time of Day							
Daytime *	12,067	1,624	13	13,830	1,803	13	0
Nighttime**	11,386	6,142	54	12,643	6,288	50	-7
Driver Fatalities by Day of Week and Time of Day							
Weekday***							
Daytime*	8,856	948	11	9,885	1,063	11	0
Nighttime**	5,021	2,340	47	5,856	2,612	45	-4
Weekend****							
Daytime*	3,211	676	21	3,945	740	19	-10
Nighttime**	6,365	3,803	60	6,787	3,677	54	-10

*6 a.m. to 6 p.m. **6 p.m. to 6 a.m. ***Monday 6 a.m. to Friday 6 p.m.
 ****Friday 6 p.m. to Monday 6 a.m.

“The highest percentage of drivers in fatal crashes who had BAC levels of .08 g/dL or higher was for drivers ages 21 to 24.”

Figure 1
Drivers Involved in Fatal Crashes with BAC Levels .08 g/dL or Higher by Age Group, 2004

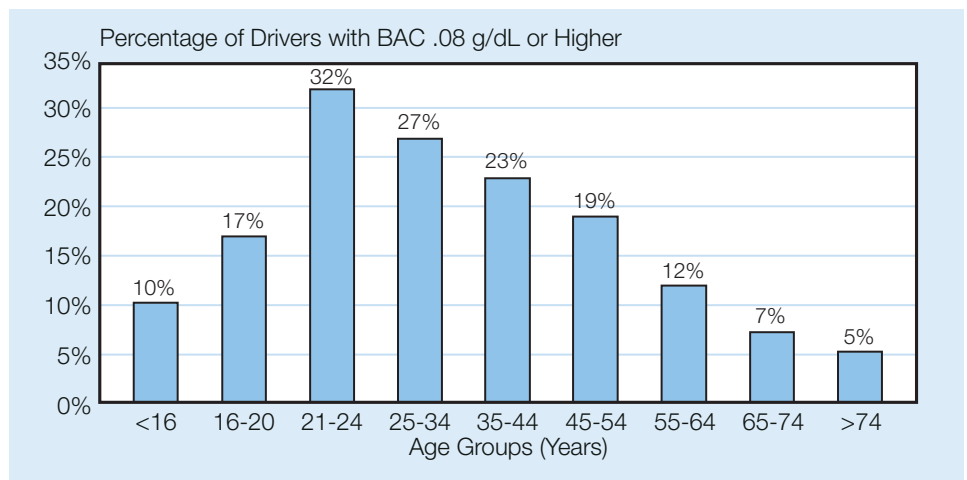


Table 6

Drivers in Fatal Crashes with BAC .08 g/dL or Higher by Age, Gender, and Vehicle Type, 1994 and 2004

	Total Drivers						Change in Percentage with BAC .08 g/dL or Higher, 1994-2004
	1994			2004			
	Total Number of Drivers	BAC .08 g/dL or Higher		Total Number of Drivers	BAC .08 g/dL or Higher		
	Number	Percent of Total		Number	Percent of Total		
Total*	54,549	12,362	23	58,080	11,791	20	-13
Drivers by Age Group (Years)							
16-20	7,723	1,367	18	7,709	1,314	17	-6
21-24	6,291	2,075	33	6,382	2,069	32	-3
25-34	12,891	3,981	31	11,179	3,008	27	-13
35-44	9,951	2,576	26	10,682	2,465	23	-12
45-54	6,493	1,193	18	9,102	1,684	19	6
55-64	3,828	471	12	5,573	691	12	0
65-74	3,194	286	9	3,057	222	7	-22
75+	2,867	124	4	3,142	143	5	25
Drivers by Sex							
Male	40,233	10,292	26	42,045	9,843	23	-12
Female	13,567	1,869	14	15,268	1,815	12	-14
Drivers by Vehicle Type							
Passenger Cars	30,103	7,155	24	25,393	5,589	22	-8
Light Trucks	16,235	4,098	25	22,217	4,773	21	-16
Large Trucks	4,592	94	2	4,799	52	1	-50
Motorcycles	2,330	769	33	4,095	1,117	27	-18

*Numbers shown for groups of drivers do not add to the total number of drivers due to unknown or other data not included.

Drivers

In fatal crashes in 2004, the highest percentage of drivers with BAC levels of .08 g/dL or higher was for drivers ages 21 to 24 (32%), followed by ages 25 to 34 (27%) and 35 to 44 (23%).

The percentages of drivers with BAC levels of .08 g/dL or higher in fatal crashes in 2004 were 27 percent for motorcycle operators, 22 percent for passenger cars, and 21 percent for light trucks. The percentage of drivers with BAC levels .08 g/dL or higher in fatal crashes was the lowest for large trucks (1%).

Safety belts were used by only 28 percent of fatally injured drivers with BAC levels of .08 g/dL or higher, compared to 41 percent of fatally injured with BAC levels between .01 g/dL and .07 g/dL and 57 percent of fatally injured drivers with no alcohol (BAC = .00 g/dL).

Drivers with BAC levels of .08 g/dL or higher involved in fatal crashes were 8 times more likely to have a prior conviction for Driving While Impaired (DWI) than were drivers with no alcohol (BAC = .00 g/dL) (8% and 1%, respectively).

In 2004, 85 percent (11,791) of the 13,952 drivers with BAC .01 g/dL or higher who were involved in fatal crashes had BAC levels at or above .08 g/dL, and 51 percent (7,084) had BAC levels at or above .16 g/dL. The most frequently recorded BAC level among drinking drivers involved in fatal crashes was .18 g/dL.

“The percentage of drivers with BAC .08 or higher in fatal crashes was highest for motorcycle operators.”

Figure 2
Previous Driving Records of Drivers Involved in Fatal Crashes, by Blood Alcohol Concentration, 2004

“In 2004, more than half of the drivers involved in fatal crashes who had been drinking had a BAC of .16 or higher.”

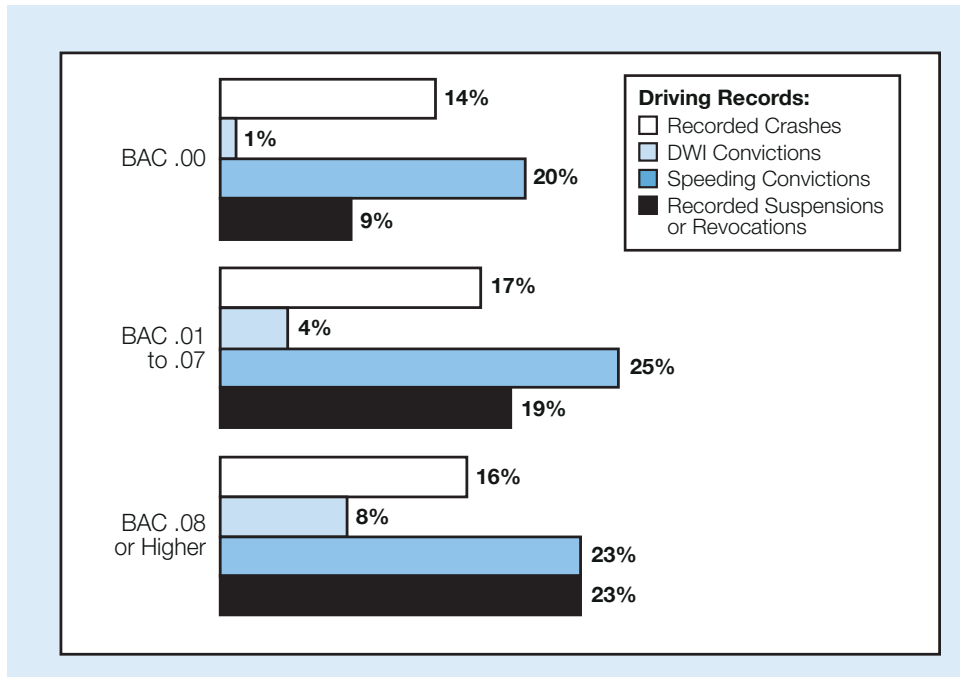


Figure 3
Distribution of BAC Levels for Drivers Involved in Fatal Crashes with BAC .01 or Higher

For more information:
 Information on alcohol involvement in traffic fatalities is available from the National Center for Statistics and Analysis, NPO-101, 400 Seventh Street, SW., Washington, DC 20590. NCSA information can also be obtained by telephone or by fax-on-demand at 800-934-8517. Fax messages should be sent to 202-366-7078. General information on highway traffic safety can be accessed by Internet users at www.nhtsa.dot.gov/people/ncaa. To report a safety-related problem or to inquire about motor vehicle safety information, contact the Vehicle Safety Hotline at 888-327-4236.

Other fact sheets available from the National Center for Statistics and Analysis are *Overview, Occupant Protection, Older Population, Speeding, Children, Young Drivers, Pedestrians, Pedalcyclists, Motorcycles, Large Trucks, School Transportation-Related Crashes, State Traffic Data, and State Alcohol Estimates*. Detailed data on motor vehicle traffic crashes are published annually in *Traffic Safety Facts: A Compilation of Motor Vehicle Crash Data from the Fatality Analysis Reporting System and the General Estimates System*.

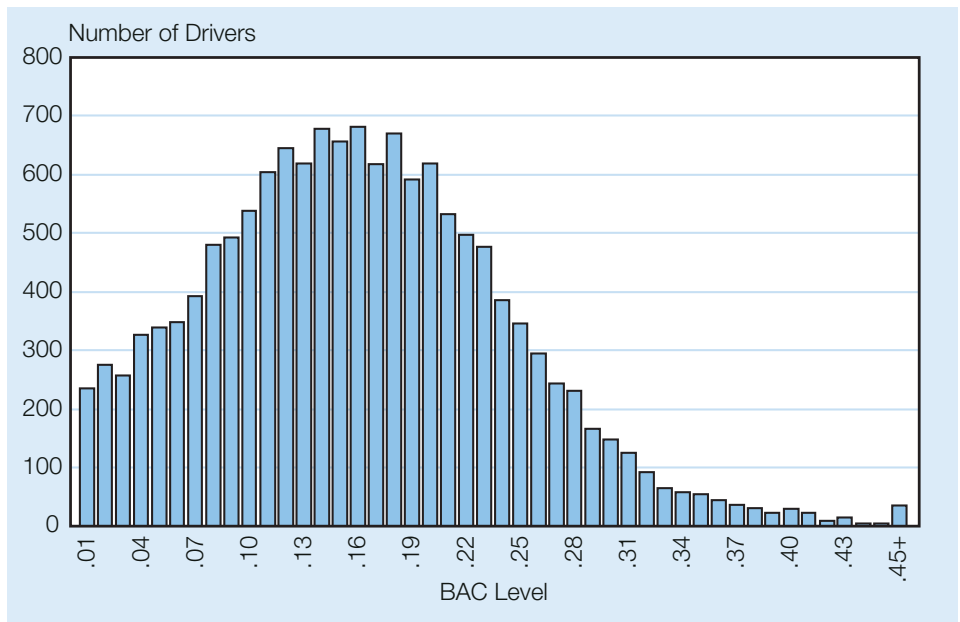


Table 7

Traffic Fatalities by State and Highest Blood Alcohol Concentration in the Crash, 2004

State	Total Fatalities	No Alcohol (BAC .00 g/dL)		Low Alcohol (BAC .01-.07 g/dL)		High Alcohol (BAC ≥ .08 g/dL)		Very High Alcohol (BAC ≥ .16 g/dL)		Any Alcohol (BAC ≥ .01 g/dL)	
		Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Alabama	1,154	713	62	48	4	394	34	235	20	442	38
Alaska	101	70	69	1	1	30	30	19	19	31	31
Arizona	1,150	715	62	60	5	376	33	227	20	435	38
Arkansas	704	428	61	40	6	236	33	147	21	276	39
California	4,120	2,477	60	276	7	1,367	33	853	21	1,643	40
Colorado	665	406	61	34	5	225	34	138	21	259	39
Connecticut	291	164	56	15	5	112	38	64	22	127	44
Delaware	134	83	62	3	2	48	36	29	21	51	38
Dist of Columbia	43	26	59	5	12	12	28	7	15	18	41
Florida	3,244	2,023	62	169	5	1,053	32	696	21	1,222	38
Georgia	1,634	1,109	68	75	5	450	28	292	18	525	32
Hawaii	142	77	54	13	9	52	37	30	21	65	46
Idaho	260	167	64	12	4	81	31	52	20	93	36
Illinois	1,356	752	55	87	6	517	38	298	22	604	45
Indiana	947	648	68	45	5	254	27	157	17	299	32
Iowa	390	280	72	19	5	91	23	55	14	110	28
Kansas	461	313	68	27	6	121	26	77	17	148	32
Kentucky	964	656	68	39	4	269	28	175	18	308	32
Louisiana	904	490	54	69	8	345	38	214	24	414	46
Maine	194	124	64	11	6	58	30	33	17	70	36
Maryland	643	357	55	55	9	231	36	124	19	286	45
Massachusetts	476	274	57	22	5	181	38	110	23	203	43
Michigan	1,159	729	63	64	6	367	32	230	20	430	37
Minnesota	567	383	68	14	2	170	30	118	21	184	32
Mississippi	900	559	62	23	3	317	35	196	22	341	38
Missouri	1,130	681	60	62	5	388	34	242	21	449	40
Montana	229	124	54	6	3	100	43	70	30	106	46
Nebraska	254	162	64	14	5	78	31	50	20	92	36
Nevada	395	243	61	20	5	133	34	86	22	152	39
New Hampshire	171	112	65	8	5	51	30	34	20	59	35
New Jersey	731	461	63	42	6	227	31	144	20	270	37
New Mexico	521	310	60	26	5	185	36	135	26	211	40
New York	1,493	906	61	93	6	494	33	284	19	587	39
North Carolina	1,557	1,005	65	57	4	496	32	309	20	553	35
North Dakota	100	61	61	5	5	35	35	28	28	39	39
Ohio	1,286	794	62	75	6	418	32	297	23	492	38
Oklahoma	774	496	64	34	4	245	32	156	20	278	36
Oregon	456	257	56	40	9	159	35	96	21	199	44
Pennsylvania	1,490	877	59	72	5	541	36	335	22	614	41
Rhode Island	83	41	50	1	2	41	49	28	33	42	50
South Carolina	1,046	583	56	51	5	413	39	282	27	464	44
South Dakota	197	111	56	10	5	76	39	54	27	86	44
Tennessee	1,288	769	60	65	5	454	35	266	21	519	40
Texas	3,583	1,941	54	225	6	1,417	40	938	26	1,642	46
Utah	296	224	76	1	0	70	24	38	13	72	24
Vermont	98	66	68	12	12	20	20	13	13	32	32
Virginia	925	567	61	52	6	307	33	188	20	359	39
Washington	563	317	56	23	4	223	40	144	26	246	44
West Virginia	411	275	67	22	5	114	28	81	20	136	33
Wisconsin	792	434	55	40	5	318	40	214	27	358	45
Wyoming	164	105	64	5	3	54	33	36	22	59	36
U.S. Total	42,636	25,942	61	2,285	5	14,409	34	9,120	21	16,694	39
Puerto Rico	494	246	50	27	5	221	45	138	28	248	50

Note: Percentages are calculated from unrounded data. Totals may not equal sum of components due to independent rounding.

Table 8

Traffic Fatalities by State and Highest Driver Blood Alcohol Concentration in the Crash, 2004

State	Total Fatalities	No Alcohol (BAC = .00 g/dL)		Low Alcohol (BAC = .01-.07 g/dL)		High Alcohol (BAC ≥ .08 g/dL)		Very High Alcohol (BAC ≥ .16 g/dL)		Any Alcohol (BAC ≥ .01 g/dL)	
		Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Alabama	1,153	740	64	47	4	367	32	213	18	414	36
Alaska	100	71	71	1	1	28	28	17	17	29	29
Arizona	1,133	755	67	56	5	322	28	183	16	378	33
Arkansas	703	445	63	40	6	219	31	133	19	258	37
California	4,112	2,706	66	252	6	1,154	28	681	17	1,406	34
Colorado	664	435	65	35	5	194	29	115	17	229	35
Connecticut	289	168	58	15	5	106	37	60	21	121	42
Delaware	134	92	68	3	2	39	29	21	16	42	32
Dist of Columbia	43	27	62	6	13	11	25	6	13	16	38
Florida	3,242	2,219	68	158	5	865	27	541	17	1,023	32
Georgia	1,629	1,168	72	69	4	392	24	243	15	461	28
Hawaii	142	87	61	10	7	46	32	24	17	55	39
Idaho	260	172	66	11	4	76	29	49	19	88	34
Illinois	1,356	804	59	85	6	467	34	257	19	552	41
Indiana	946	671	71	39	4	236	25	143	15	275	29
Iowa	389	283	73	20	5	86	22	52	13	106	27
Kansas	459	315	69	26	6	118	26	75	16	144	31
Kentucky	964	673	70	35	4	256	27	164	17	291	30
Louisiana	901	522	58	67	7	312	35	188	21	379	42
Maine	194	125	64	11	6	58	30	33	17	69	36
Maryland	641	384	60	49	8	209	33	107	17	257	40
Massachusetts	475	291	61	21	4	164	34	93	20	184	39
Michigan	1,155	769	67	58	5	329	28	201	17	386	33
Minnesota	567	392	69	15	3	160	28	111	20	175	31
Mississippi	900	575	64	23	3	302	34	181	20	325	36
Missouri	1,128	709	63	60	5	359	32	219	19	419	37
Montana	228	125	55	6	3	97	43	68	30	103	45
Nebraska	251	163	65	14	5	75	30	47	19	88	35
Nevada	392	267	68	18	5	107	27	66	17	125	32
New Hampshire	171	114	67	7	4	50	29	33	19	57	33
New Jersey	730	500	68	39	5	191	26	112	15	230	32
New Mexico	521	343	66	25	5	153	29	106	20	178	34
New York	1,488	985	66	84	6	419	28	226	15	503	34
North Carolina	1,553	1,070	69	57	4	425	27	250	16	483	31
North Dakota	100	61	61	5	5	34	34	27	27	39	39
Ohio	1,280	818	64	72	6	391	31	276	22	463	36
Oklahoma	774	520	67	31	4	223	29	136	18	254	33
Oregon	454	267	59	42	9	145	32	85	19	187	41
Pennsylvania	1,488	908	61	68	5	512	34	310	21	580	39
Rhode Island	83	45	54	1	2	37	45	25	30	39	46
South Carolina	1,039	619	60	51	5	369	36	249	24	420	40
South Dakota	196	113	58	10	5	74	38	51	26	83	42
Tennessee	1,280	797	62	64	5	420	33	238	19	483	38
Texas	3,579	2,097	59	218	6	1,264	35	804	22	1,482	41
Utah	295	229	78	1	0	65	22	36	12	66	22
Vermont	98	67	69	12	12	19	19	12	12	31	31
Virginia	921	592	64	50	5	279	30	164	18	329	36
Washington	561	335	60	23	4	203	36	127	23	226	40
West Virginia	408	284	70	21	5	103	25	71	17	124	30
Wisconsin	785	448	57	41	5	296	38	198	25	337	43
Wyoming	164	108	66	5	3	51	31	34	21	56	34
U.S. Total	42,518	27,473	65	2,171	5	12,874	30	7,859	18	15,045	35
Puerto Rico	493	296	60	25	5	173	35	97	20	197	40

Note: Percentages are calculated from unrounded data. Totals may not equal sum of components due to independent rounding.